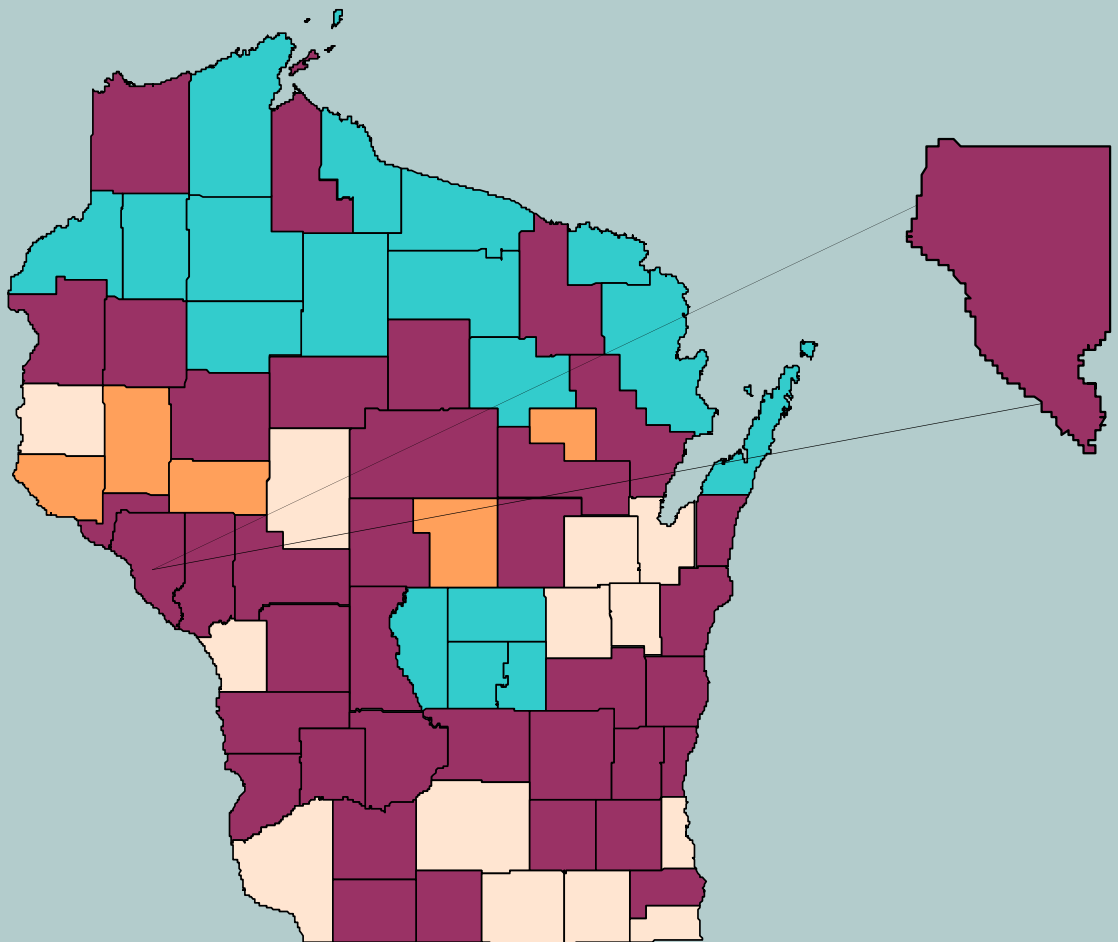


# Buffalo County Workforce Profile

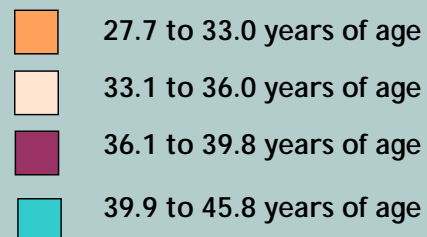
Median Age by County, 2000



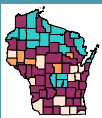
Your complete  
guide to the  
state of the  
labor force of  
today and a  
glimpse into  
the economy of  
tomorrow.



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
October 2002



Source: Census 2000 of the United States



## County Population

During the first year of the new millennium, Buffalo County's population increased 0.7 percent, keeping pace with state and national growth rates. The fastest growing municipalities in Buffalo County were along the Mississippi River - a reasonable commute to Winona, Minnesota - or in the northwest part of the county, within a reasonable commute to Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Increases in Buffalo County's population between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses were slow, at best. The 1990 Census reported Buffalo County's total population at 13,584. The population total reported for Buffalo County from Census 2000 was 13,804, an increase of 220 and a 1.6 percent growth rate. During the 90s decade the national population grew by 13.1 percent and the state population grew by 9.6 percent.

Some of the fastest growing Buffalo County municipalities during the 90s decade include; Alma - grew 12.3 percent, Dover - grew by 7.3 percent, and Buffalo - where population grew by a 13.7 percent rate. Population growth in Alma, Buffalo, and along Buffalo's western border can be attributed - at least in part - to increasing numbers of persons living in Buf-

falo County Wisconsin but working across the river in Minnesota. The City of Buffalo had the highest numerical increase in population between the two Censuses, increasing by 125 persons - accounting for more than half of Buffalo County's total population increase during the 90s decade.

When looking at population changes at the county level, there are a number of factors that contribute to growth or decline in the county's population. By examining the components of change in the county's population, which include births, deaths, and migration, we see that Buffalo County is heavily dependent on migration of residents into the county to increase the county's population. Almost 70 percent of the population increase recorded in Buffalo County in the 90s decade was due to persons moving into the county and of the 93 new residents in the county in 2001, 63 were residents that moved into the county, while only 30 new residents were added as a result of the county's birth rate exceeding its death rate.

Buffalo County, as many Wisconsin Counties, is experiencing an aging resident population. Buffalo

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Total Population

	2000 Census	January 1, 2001 Estimate	Percent change
United States	281,421,906	283,474,000	0.7%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,400,449	0.7%
Buffalo County	13,804	13,897	0.7%

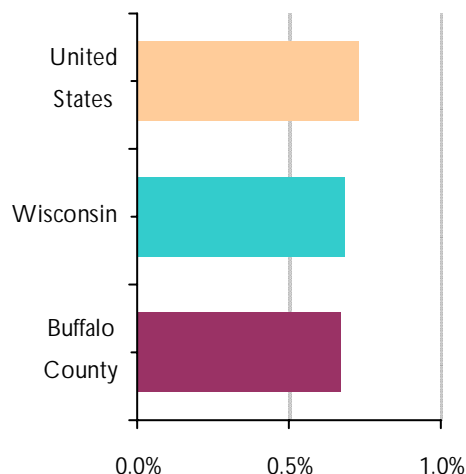
### Ten Largest Municipalities

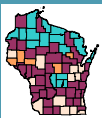
Mondovi, City	2,634	2,656	0.8%
Buffalo, City	1,040	1,051	1.1%
Fountain City, City	983	986	0.3%
Alma, City	942	941	-0.1%
Buffalo, Town	667	677	1.5%
Naples, Town	584	597	2.2%
Nelson, Town	586	587	0.2%
Waumandee, Town	515	521	1.2%
Milton, Town	517	519	0.4%
Dover, Town	484	485	0.2%

\* Buffalo portion only

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services, 2002

### Population Growth 2000-2001

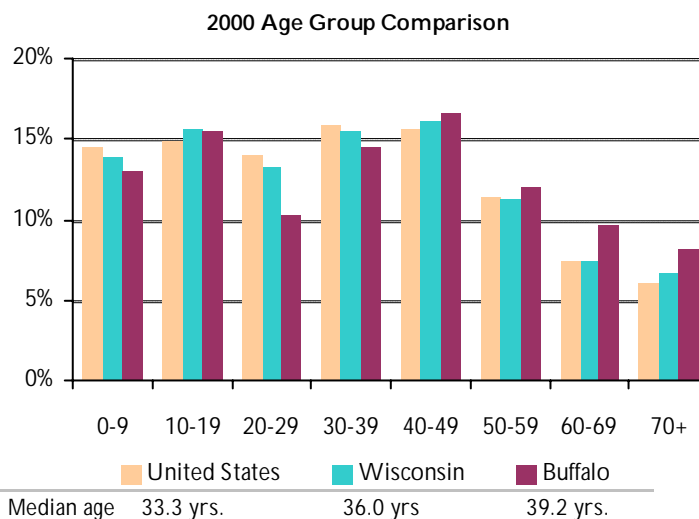




## State of Wisconsin - Buffalo County

County's average age has been on the rise for several decades now. In 1980, the average age of a Buffalo County resident was 31.7, in 1990 it was 34.9, and by the year 2000 the average age of a Buffalo County resident had climbed to 39.2 years old.

When examining the age cohort charts on the right, one notices that the percentage of the Buffalo County resident population in the 0-9, 10-19, and 20-29 year old age cohorts make up a substantially smaller part of Buffalo County's population than those same cohorts do on a national level. Buffalo County also has a smaller percentage of persons in those age cohorts than the State of Wisconsin does.



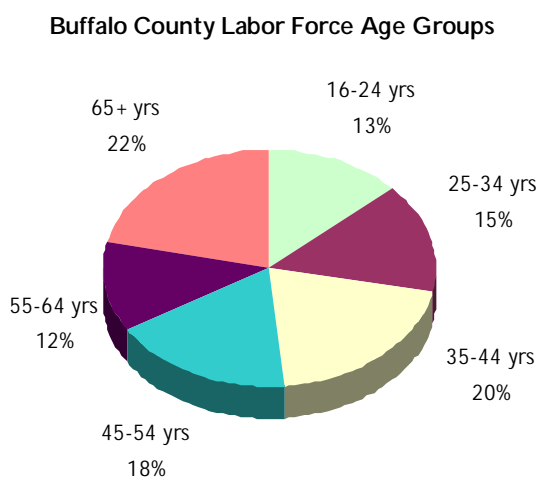
Source: US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

The "Baby Boomer" generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, is the largest generation in the history of Buffalo County (and Wisconsin). There was no noticeable 'baby blip' in Buffalo County following the baby boom. In general, only areas with significant minority populations experienced a 'baby blip' - defined as a large post-boomer population surge. Wisconsin and Buffalo County birth rates have declined dramatically since the end of the 'Boomer' generation. Boomers had less chil-

dren than their parents did.

Employers in Buffalo County that count on workers aged 16-29 are finding it increasingly difficult to find and retain workers. They are turning to other age cohorts and different recruitment methods in order to help fill their needs. The Buffalo County 50-59 year old age cohort and 60-69 age cohort have posted huge increases in their numbers. This trend will continue into the future.

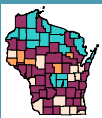
## County Civilian Labor Force



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

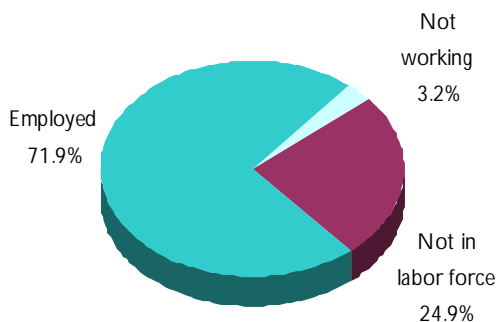
The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons who are 16 years old and older. Readers should keep in mind that people who are "not working" includes people who are "unemployed" and people who are "not in the labor force". "Unemployed" does not include all people who are "not working", some people who are not working are not technically unemployed. Examples of people who are not working but who are not unemployed are: retirees, fulltime students choosing not to work, persons with too many employment barriers to enter the work force, persons that have become discouraged and stopped looking for work, or other people who choose not to work or look for work. Persons in a prison, mental institution, or nursing home are not counted as mem-

(Continued on page 3)



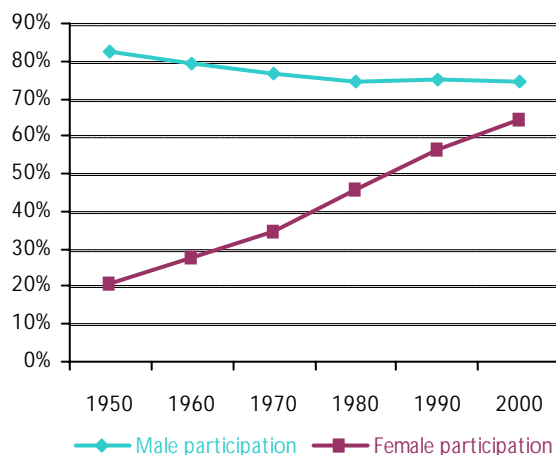
## State of Wisconsin - Buffalo County

### 2001 Labor Force Participation



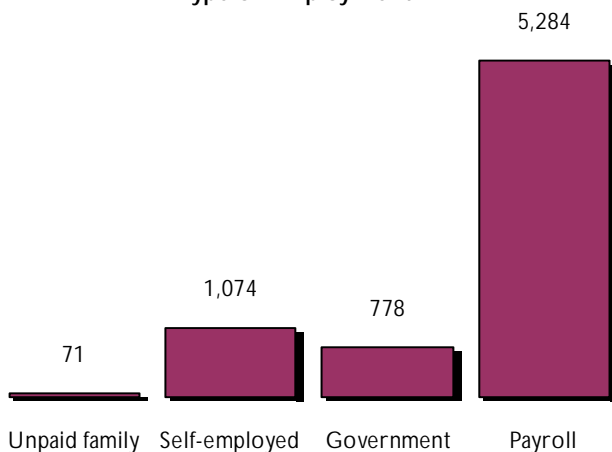
Source: Estimated from WI Dept. of Administration population estimates, Jan. 2001, US Census Bureau, and WI Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

### Labor Force Participation of Male and Female Residents



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

### Type of Employment



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

bers of the labor force, nor are they counted as unemployed. The pie chart displayed on the left provides estimates of employed, unemployed and those "not in the labor force" as a percentage of the civilian non-institutional population. The "participation rate" is the percentage of the total resident population, aged 16 and over, who are working or seeking employment. Many social and economic factors influence the participation rate in a given area. The number one reason for the dramatic shift in the rate during the last several decades has been caused by the increasing number of females entering the workforce.

In 2001, the participation rate in Buffalo County was 75.1 percent, a number that increased in Buffalo County throughout the past decade. Buffalo County has a substantially higher participation rate than does the nation (67.2) or the State of Wisconsin (73.5). Buffalo County had the eighteenth highest participation rate out of Wisconsin's 72 counties in 2001.

According to Census 2000, 15 percent of all people working in Buffalo County were self employed, many of those as individual family farmers. Even after a decade with noticeable declining in Wisconsin's family farms, Buffalo County still has a significant number of people farming today.

According to a 1996 report by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, out of Wisconsin's 72 counties, Buffalo had the highest percentage of jobs that were farm and farm-related as compared to total county employment. Buffalo was one of only four counties in Wisconsin with more than 40 percent of total employment directly related to farming and farm activities, the exact percentage of total employment that farm and farm related employment accounted for in Buffalo County in 1996 was 48.3 percent.

The 1992 US Agricultural Census reported that Buffalo County had 982 farms, and in 1997 that had increased to 1,000 farms. (The 1997 US Agricultural Census is the most recent Census of it's type available.) However, the number of acres devoted to farming decreased slightly over that same time period, from 323,482 to 308,581 in 1997.

(Continued on page 4)



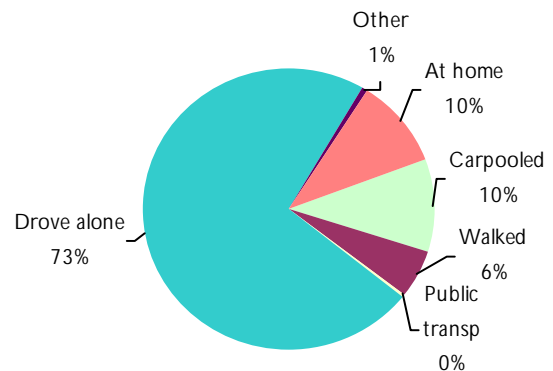
## State of Wisconsin - Buffalo County

Buffalo County workers are mobile. But they are 'going it alone' more than ever before. In the 1990 Census, 62 percent of workers drove alone and 13 percent carpooled. According to Census 2000, 73 percent of Buffalo County residents drive to work alone and 10 percent carpool.

The time it takes Buffalo County residents to get to work is increasing. In 1990, the average Buffalo County worker took 19.9 minutes to get to work, in the year 2000 that increased to an average commute in minutes of 24.4 minutes. Increased job opportunities, and the ever increasing number of Buffalo County residents commuting to Winona County Minnesota for work are major contributing factors in those increased travel to work times.

Since the Mississippi River separates Buffalo County and Minnesota, commuter routes to Minnesota are limited to highways with a bridge across the river. There are only two highways in Buffalo County providing access across the river into Minnesota. These are Highway 54, to the City of Winona, Minnesota and Highway 25 to the City of Wabasha, Minnesota. As commuting across the river for work

County Travel-to-Work Patterns

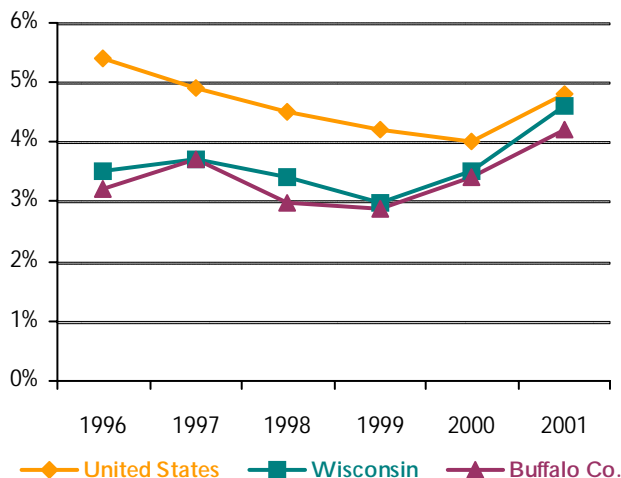


Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

increases, these roadways will become more congested during rush hour commutes, further increasing commute to work times in Buffalo County.

On of the last pieces of data released from the Census is destination county commuting data. That is, data on which county residents are driving to other counties for work and how many workers are staying within their county of residence for work. Destination county commuting data from Census 2000 has not been released yet.

Unemployment Rate Comparison



In the 90s decade, Buffalo County's unemployment rate declined dramatically. In 1990, Buffalo County's annual average unemployment rate was 5.7 percent and it soared to 6.1 percent in 1991. Throughout the middle of the 90s decade, unemployment rates fell in the county, to a post-Vietnam War era low of 2.9 percent in 1999. Unemployment rates in 2000 and 2001 have increased due to the recent economic slowdown, exasperated by the tragedy in September 2001, but rates remain well below the high rates witnessed in Buffalo County in the early 1990s.

Buffalo County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force	8,000	8,100	8,000	7,700	8,000	8,100
Employed	7,700	7,800	7,800	7,500	7,700	7,700
Unemployed	260	300	240	230	270	340
Unemployment Rate	3.2%	3.7%	3.0%	2.9%	3.4%	4.2%

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, revised March 2002



## County Industry Employment

### Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Percent change	
							1 year	5 year
<b>Total</b>	4,390	4,454	4,525	4,605	4,817	5,025	4.3%	14.4%
<b>Goods Producing</b>	459	484	478	466	465	456	-1.8%	-0.5%
Construction & Mining	110	124	122	127	134	133	-1.0%	20.3%
Manufacturing	348	360	356	339	330	324	-2.0%	-7.1%
Durable	130	146	138	135	121	118	-2.1%	-8.8%
Nondurable	219	215	218	204	210	205	-2.0%	-6.1%
<b>Service Producing</b>	3,932	3,970	4,047	4,139	4,353	4,568	5.0%	16.2%
Transportation, Communications & Utilities	1,367	1,398	1,405	1,512	1,667	1,846	10.7%	35.1%
Total Trade	768	747	762	802	824	841	2.0%	9.4%
Wholesale	200	209	197	185	206	243	17.7%	21.4%
Retail	569	538	565	617	618	598	-3.2%	5.2%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	140	143	147	145	155	156	0.6%	11.8%
Services & Misc.	851	800	816	785	779	803	3.2%	-5.6%
Total Government	806	882	916	895	928	922	-0.6%	14.4%

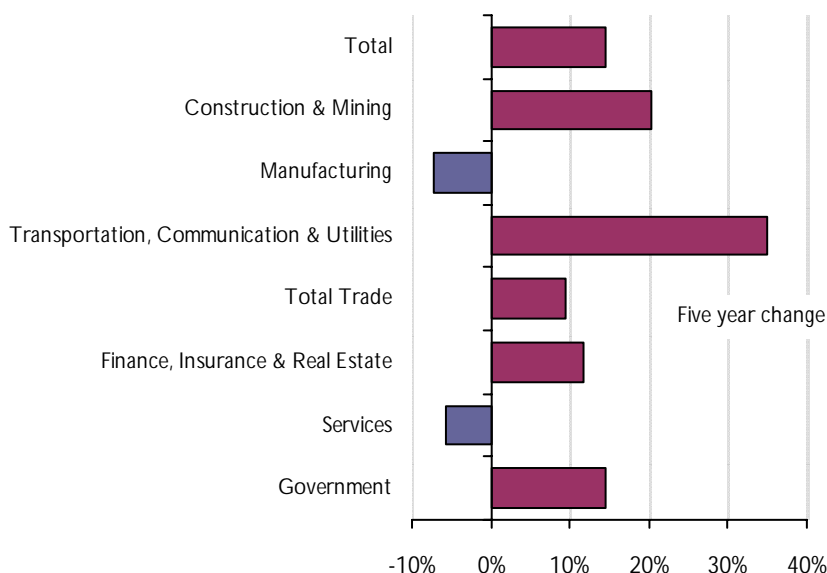
Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Nonfarm wage and salary employment measures the number of jobs within a county excluding farming, military, and self-employed workers. This data measures the number of jobs within the county without consideration of where the job-holder lives. Numerous Buffalo County residents commute outside of the county to their jobs; this is a significant

reason why the number of residents living in Buffalo that are employed was 3,100 larger than the number of jobs located within the county during 2001.

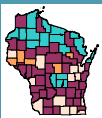
The transportation, communications, and public utility division has been the driving force of the Buffalo County economy during the 90s. While posting just modest growth in the five years detailed above, that division has added about 500 workers during the 90s decade, better than a 50 percent growth rate during the decade.

### Employment Change by Industry Division: 1996 to 2001



Source: WI DWD, Nonfarm wage and salary estimates, revised March 2002

Nonfarm employment increased by 1,405 during the 90s decade, and 635 in the last five years. That's a 38.8 and 14.5 percent growth rate respectfully. Meanwhile, during the 90s decade, population increased by just 220 in Buffalo County (page 1). Buffalo accounted for the shortfall between job growth and population growth by increasing the participation rate among females and digging into the unemployed pool of workers to find employees. These sources are largely tapped, and the workers required to fuel future job growth in Buffalo are going to have to come from other sources.



## State of Wisconsin - Buffalo County

### Top 10 Public & Private Employers

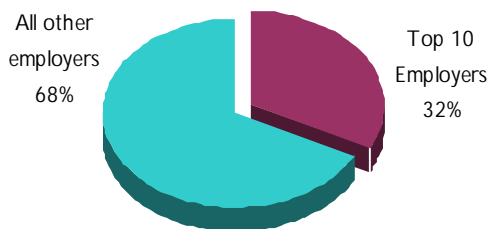
Company	Product or Service	Size
Marten Transport	Over-The-Road Trucking	1,000+
Mondovi Public School	Education	100-249
Cochrane-Fountain City Public School	Education	100-249
County of Buffalo	Executive & General Government	100-249
American Lutheran Homes	Nursing & Personal Care Provider	100-249
Dairyland Power	Electric Power Services	100-249
School District of Alma	Education	50-99
Midwest Dental Care Mondovi	Dental Care Provider	50-99
US Army Corps of Engineers	Engineering Services	50-99
La Crosse Milling	Animal Feed	50-99

### Top 10 Industry Groups

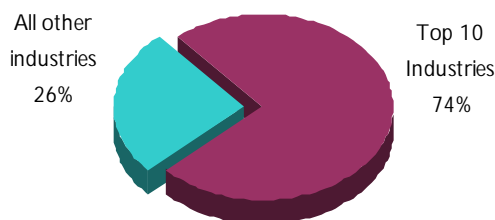
Industry Group	March 2001		Numeric change	
	Employers	Employees	1-year	5-year
Trucking and Warehousing	*	*	*	*
Educational Services	4	464	-10	21
Health Services	17	346	-5	-26
Eating and Drinking Places	37	319	-12	23
Social Services	8	204	15	40
Food and Kindred Products	6	190	8	20
Engineering & Management Services	9	145	8	114
Executive, Legislative, and General	22	145	-2	-3
Wholesale Trade-Nondurable Goods	8	125	60	48
Electric, Gas, and Sanitary Services	*	*	*	*

\*data suppressed to maintain confidentiality

Top 10 Employers' Share of  
Nonfarm Employment



Top 10 Industry Group Share  
of Nonfarm Employment



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, ES-202 file tape, December 2001

There was a total of 352 employers in Buffalo County in the first quarter of 2001. The top ten employers provide over two-third of jobs in Buffalo County. Buffalo County's top ten industries are responsible for a higher percentage of total employment than in an average Wisconsin County, employing three out of every four workers in Buffalo County.

Except for Marten Transport, Buffalo County employers are smaller in size than what is found in many other Wisconsin Counties. Many Buffalo County employers are involved in providing services, public education, retail trade in the form of restaurant and bars, and general government administration.

(Continued on page 7)

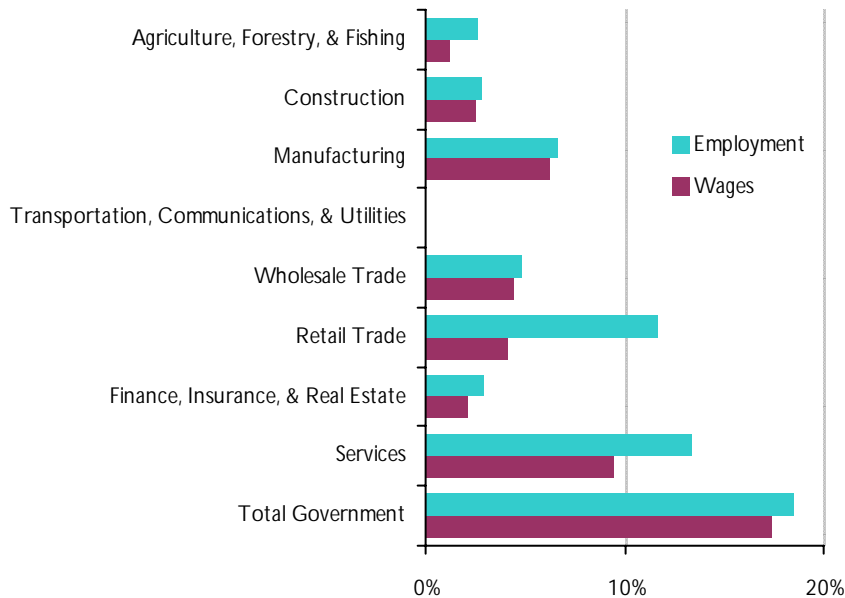


## State of Wisconsin - Buffalo County

In Buffalo County, all major industry divisions (except transportation) pay average annual average wages lower than the statewide average. The largest discrepancy appears in the finance, insurance and real estate industry (FIRE). Typically, major FIRE operations center around metropolitan areas, of which, Buffalo County has none. In addition, most of the major FIRE operations in Wisconsin take place in the eastern or south central parts of the state. Western Wisconsin's financial institutions are often headquartered in Minnesota.

Manufacturing's share of employment and percent of wages paid in Buffalo County are almost identical, unlike numerous counties, where manufacturing wages paid often exceed the percentage of employment in manufacturing. At 6.4 percent of total county employment, Buffalo's manufacturing employment share of total county employment is the lowest in the eight county area commonly referred to as Western Wisconsin (Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon), and one of the lowest percentages of manufacturing employment in the state.

**Employment & Wage Distribution by Industry Division**



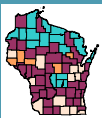
Retail trade employment represents 11.7 percent of employment, yet only 4.1 percent of the wages paid in Buffalo County. The wages in the retail trade industry division represent a significantly smaller proportion of total wages than employment, because the industry employs a large number of entry-level workers and much of the work is part-time.

**Annual Average Wage By Industry Division**

	Buffalo Co. Annual Average Wage	Wisconsin Annual Average Wage	Percent of State Average	1-year percent change	5-year percent change
All Industries*	\$ 29,567	\$ 30,922	95.6%	5.6%	27.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	\$ 13,912	\$ 22,565	61.7%	-3.1%	-0.3%
Construction	\$ 26,501	\$ 39,011	67.9%	-1.5%	30.8%
Manufacturing	\$ 27,802	\$ 39,739	70.0%	-5.1%	15.9%
Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	*	\$ 36,639	*	*	*
Wholesale Trade	\$ 27,345	\$ 40,521	67.5%	6.0%	32.8%
Retail Trade	\$ 10,343	\$ 14,596	70.9%	-7.2%	20.3%
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	\$ 21,302	\$ 40,933	52.0%	3.8%	16.3%
Services	\$ 20,855	\$ 28,775	72.5%	12.1%	30.8%
Total Government	\$ 27,727	\$ 33,785	82.1%	5.3%	30.6%

\* Mining excluded from table since wages were suppressed to maintain confidentiality in every county

Source: WI DWD, *Employment, Wages, and Taxes Due covered by Wisconsin's U.C. Law, 2002*



## Occupation and Education Characteristics of County Population

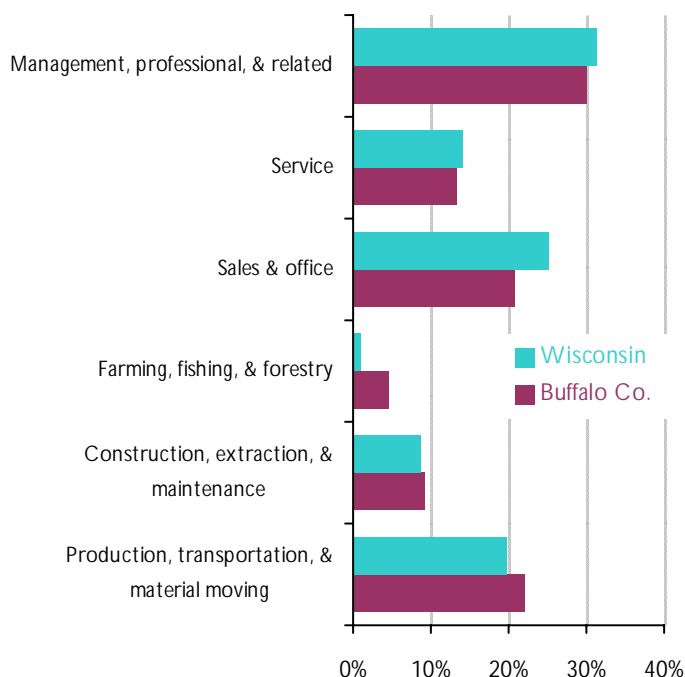
Two additional factors that are vital to the composition of Buffalo County's workforce are the occupational distribution of the labor force and the educational attainment of the county's population. The occupational distribution, which consists of information collected from Census 2000 is illustrated in the chart to the right.

A number of interesting points can be made about this distribution. First, despite the much smaller than average presence of manufacturing in Buffalo County, over 20 percent of county residents work in production, transportation and material moving occupations. However, it's in Buffalo County's strong trucking and transportation industry that many of these occupations are found.

A smaller percentage of workers in the county are employed in management and professional occupations, as well as workers in sales and office positions than the state.

Still, more Buffalo County workers (and workers statewide) had management or professional occupations than jobs in any other occupational cluster. In 1990, just over 17 percent of Buffalo County residents worked in management or professional occupations but by the year 2000 that percentage almost doubled, climbing to almost 30 percent in Buffalo County. While exact destination commut-

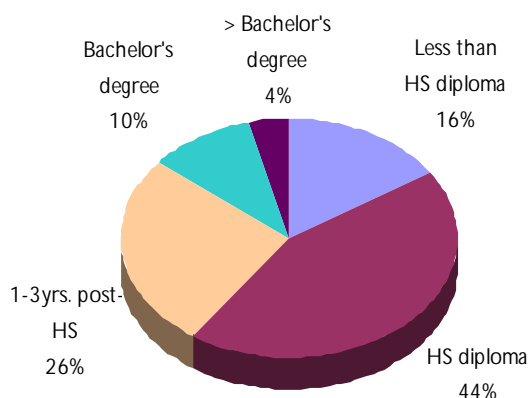
Employment by Occupation Group: 2000



US Department of Commerce, Census 2000

ing data is not available from Census 2000 yet, it is known that as of the year 2000, 27 percent of Buffalo County residents worked in a state other than their state of residence. Presumably, many of these individuals work across the Mississippi River at 'white-collar' jobs in the Winona Minnesota area.

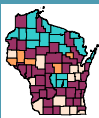
Education Attainment in 2000



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

The educational attainment of Buffalo County residents 25 and over in the year 2000 is detailed on the pie chart below. Eighty-four percent of Buffalo County residents 25 years old and older had at least a high school diploma and just over 14 percent of county residents had a bachelor's degree or higher. Statewide 85.1 percent of residents 25 and over have at least a high school diploma and 22.4 percent have at least a bachelor's degree.

Buffalo County residents substantially improved their educational standing as compared to the 1990 Census. In 1990, 72.6 percent of Buffalo County residents 25 and over were high school graduates and just 10.8 percent of those 25 and over had a bachelor's degree or higher.



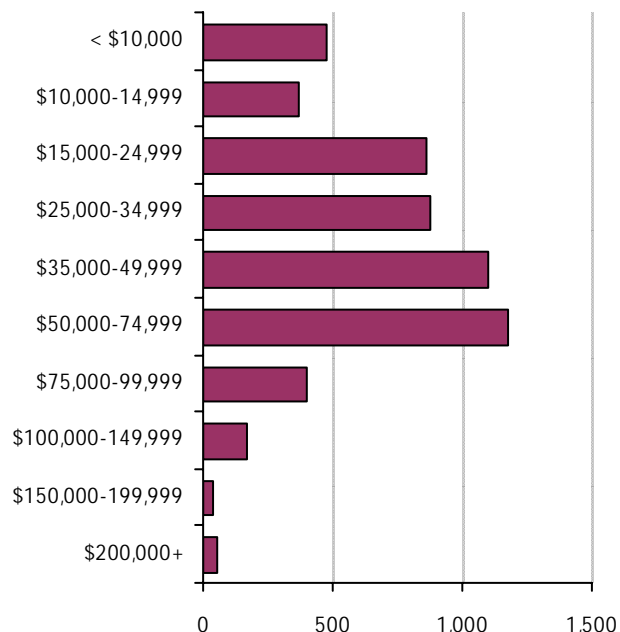
## County Income Information

Median household income, detailed on the chart to the right, includes the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Because many households consist of only one person, average household income is usually less than average family income. Mean income is the amount obtained by dividing the total income of a particular statistical universe by the number of units in that universe. Thus, mean household income is obtained by dividing total household income by the total number of households. For the various types of income, the means are based on households having those types of income. According to Census 2000, Buffalo County median household income was \$37,200; nationally it was \$41,994 and it was \$43,791 at the state level.

In 1990, Buffalo County's median family income was \$23,573; and it grew 58 percent during the 90s decade, surpassing the state and national growth rates of 49 and 40 percent, respectively.

In 1990, Buffalo County's median family income ranked fourth among the eight county Western Wisconsin area. The strong growth in income during the 90s decade in Buffalo helped the county to move up a notch to third in 2000, only Trempealeau and La Crosse had higher median household incomes in 2000.

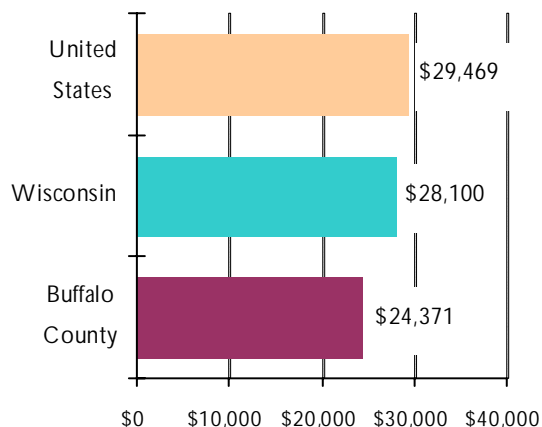
**Households by Income Range**  
Median household income in Buffalo Co. \$37,200



Source: US Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census 2000*

Per capita income (PCPI) is total income divided by the total number of residents. Income includes wages earned, dividends from investments, and transfer payments from the government. Per capita income can influence the type of services and housing available within a county.

**Per Capita Personal Income 2000**



Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

**Components of Total Personal Income: 2000**

